"Chief Clerks Presentation with Dean Foster and Vito Chiechi"
Chief Clerk's Brown Bag Lunch Series
John O'Brien Building, Capitol Campus, July 25, 2006

Chief Clerk Rich Nafziger: Thanks for coming. We're really proud to have a couple of former Chief Clerks who have worked in many, many different aspects of this institution and surrounding connected institutions and we're really proud to have them here. This is really a big event because the Secretary of State's Office and the Oral History Program is very, very interested in what you two gentlemen have to say for historical reasons, and TVW is also very interested, as well as all us staff people. So this is going to be very interesting and very exciting.

And I see we have another former Chief Clerk in the back of the room, hiding underneath the white hat. I can't remember his name, that's Alan Thompson? No, Denny Heck.

So welcome. I'm going to make a quick introduction; I'm not going to take a lot of your time. We're really proud to have Vito Chiechi with us, who is very, very involved in this institution today, involved in many, many issues and was Chief Clerk in the late seventies and early eighties, and shared the position with Dean in the '79 to '81 period, and learned a lot from that. In fact, the last tie we had, Dean came in and helped set up the model that he had learned from, to get things going. Dean was here pretty much in the whole seventies and came back in the eighties before he became the chief of staff over in Governor Gardner's office. But in 1999, he came back and helped set up the Chief Clerk's office when we went into a tie, and it was very, very helpful. Things have really functioned very well since then. I just want to say that a lot of what we do here has been shaped by some of the things that these two gentlemen have done.

How do we want to do this?

Dean Foster: I'm going to start.

Rich Nafziger: You're ready to start, okay, well, thank you, Dean.

Vito Chiechi: He's older than I am, he starts first. He's been here longer than me.

Dean Foster: Well, thanks, Rich. First, I want to suggest that the fact that Vito and I are each on the board of the Oral History Program and each are on the TVW board, has nothing to do with the fact that both of those institutions are here today.

I wanted to start by starting with my career in the Legislature and just talking a little bit about things that have changed and how you've got it so good. I started when I was in high school in 1959; I came down to work for the 1959 Legislature. The 1959 Legislature was—all of the work that was done by members and staff

was all done in the Legislative Building. Members did not have offices. The members did not have secretaries or administrative assistants or whatever they've become known as now. Each of the rooms that were over there that have now become caucuses and other rooms, were shared by the staff and sometimes several staff of the committees.

There were thirty-three committees in the House and thirty-three in the Senate. Members, in the Senate, were on nine or ten committees or more. In the House, members were on five, or six, or seven committees, or more. One of the things I recall is that—and this was in 1959—they managed in 1959, about the beginning of the second week of the session, to name the membership of the committees. And that's about the time other people got hired to come in. Now, there wasn't a year-round staff then. In the interim, they were called interim committees, and there were some people hired there. And then during the session, people went to work for the standing committees. It was employment "at will," for sure, in the largest sense of patronage. People came in to be committee clerks. The lawyers that were there were lawyers, but that's about the only time that you really could connect any experience with any of the staff people who worked for the committees.

The members generally showed up on the Sunday night before the session started and they had a caucus on Sunday. They did have an organization caucus usually during the weekend of the Husky/Cougar football game. And so one year it was in Spokane, or Pullman, or eastern Washington and next time it was on this side. There were eleven women in the House of Representatives; it was very strong "Mrs. or Miss" titles. There were twenty-five attorneys in the House of Representatives, and sixteen farmers, and seven teachers and the rest were spread out.

Now, what hasn't changed is that the Legislative Manual still almost looks exactly like the same Legislative Manual that they had then. Although, I noticed they don't say the age anymore, they say the year of birth. If you really want to know how old somebody is you're going to calculate that.

Twenty-seven of the members in the House of Representatives in 1959 had no previous legislative experience. So they showed up here on the Sunday before they're sworn in on Monday; a week later they named committees.

There were still forty-nine legislative districts but there were ninety-nine members of the House of Representatives. The districts had one, two or three members in them, plus one senator. And that was done to try to do something about balancing district size with population. Which as you know, by redistricting, the rules have changed; it's changed quite a bit and they don't allow that. Federal court later changed the number that we had from ninety-nine to ninety eight.

The bill rooms in the House and Senate—in the House, the bill room was located in that area right next to the Speaker's office, where, I believe, the Majority Leader is still in that office; that's where the bill room on the Floor was. And in the Senate, the bill room and the telephone system—I worked at the Senate and we had one of those telephone systems where you plugged in; you got the central call and then you plugged them in. That was right by, I think it's the Majority Caucus now, but it still was on the third floor.

Vito Chiechi: Dean, just to interrupt you. On telephones, you can imagine we would have twenty, thirty, forty U.S. West people [AT&T] on the Floor the day the before the session started. And darn-near at the time that session started they were still trying to connect telephones to various members and to the Speaker—I mean, to the Chief Clerk and the Speaker's rostrum. I'll never forget one year what happened. The telephones were connected to, instead of the Speaker to the Majority Leader, it was connected to the Minority Leader. I can remember we got hell over that, oh, Dean and I got hell over that for hours! One of the sidelights.

Dean Foster: The people responsible in those days: Ward Bowden was the Secretary of the Senate—he was a printer that ran a newspaper in Monroe, and Si Holcomb was the Chief Clerk of the House. And he was the Chief Clerk of the House there and later, but he was the Chief Clerk for a total of thirty years. Absent one term when—I don't know how this happened—but the Republicans got control over the House at one period of time. So that's sort of what it looked like.

Later in the period of '59-65, when I went on to work on redistricting with Senator Bob Greive, and that was the period, in my belief, in the era, that the first significant legislative action that happened in my lifetime. That was the public/private power fight in 1961 where the House was taken over by a coalition of Republicans led by Dan Evans—you'll recognize all these names: Slade Gorton, Joel Pritchard, and a group of private power Democrats; they had the majority. John O'Brien, the public power Democrat, was the Speaker. They were on the Floor for two or three days; they had hundreds of amendments which the O'Brien people kept putting up. They would change the date of an election every day, or one day and they'd have roll call votes and they'd debate them. And then finally, the minority—actually the group that didn't have the majority but held this up for four days—finally a Republican member, I think Dan Evans, voted with them and sort of broke that filibuster up. And the following session was the year that the coalition was formed of six or seven Democrats and the Republicans to elect Bill Day Speaker. So that was my first period of time here.

My second time was when I became Chief Clerk in 1973. The Democrats had just won an election. What happened [after the years] between '59 and '65, the other significant thing, the Republicans gained control part of that period and they opened up the committees and, finally, the Rules Committee. The committees were

allowed to have private sessions and the Rules Committee never was opened until then. And so, you talk about a committee being the power of controlling what happened on the Floor, it was done in both House and Senate Rules Committees. And the Republicans, in that period between '65 and '72, opened up the committees and opened up the Rules Committee. And that's about the time that public disclosure laws changed, and we really did become open. We, in '72, elected a lot of people who were coming back from the Vietnam War; the opening of government happened in that period of time.

And in my period—in '73—is when a significant change in the Legislature happened. Maybe because I needed a full-time job, but I hope that it was because Leonard Sawyer, who had been elected Speaker, read a Supreme Court decision about stopping the clock at the end of the session. And the Supreme Court said, "In a special session, you can run beyond the sixty days." And he decided that the Legislature—Dan Evans was governor at the time—and he decided the Legislature needed to even the power struggle between the Legislature and the governor and so he instituted—and Vito will go into this a little more because he was involved with this—he instituted full-time staff. We started hiring staff at the end of the session in '73. We actually went into a scheme that didn't work, which was to recess the Legislature for a couple of months at a time and come back and work on bills. That, basically, was killed by the lobbyists; they really hated it. And the staff got pretty tired of it, too.

And finally, my other experience that I want to talk about today was being Co-Chief Clerk during the tie. All of this leads up to it: at the beginning of the Sawyer administration I first met Vito. And Vito had been a lobbyist, and he's going to talk a little bit about lobbying and then we'll bring this all together, when we came together in the Sawyer administration, and then the tie.

Vito Chiechi: Thank you, Dean. I'm going to go back a little bit on my history. I began with the Boeing Company—worked twenty-two years for the Boeing Company—and I had various positions with them, working in the public affairs office, as well as being a budget analyst, and also administrator of their property tax. And some of you will remember the King County Assessor who got elected, Harley Hoppe. I went to work for him as his administrative assistant. And that was the first time that a Republican had been elected to a King County position other than Prosecuting Attorney. In those days they were all Democrats. And from there I started working in the public affairs office and I would come down to Olympia every once in a while to assist the Boeing Company when there was a property tax issue coming up. They would ask me to come down and testify and that's how I became involved in that point in time, right around 1971, 72, 73. That's where I met Speaker Sawyer, and a number of the other individuals on the Democrat side.

Speaker Sawyer asked me to come to work for him as his administrative assistant. Well, I was a known Republican, and had worked for Harley Hoppe, and so I said, "Leonard, how am I going to come in there as a known Republican?" He says, "Look, here's what you do. We'll get Senator Magnuson and Senator Jackson and Neil Chaney, who was the state Democrat chairman at the time, to write a letter saying that this guy is okay." And so the first day of the caucus when I went in with Leonard, I think it was Bob Charette, who said, "Leonard, how come you hired this guy?" And Leonard said, "I'm glad you asked me that question." And he pulls out these three letters, all of them very, very laudatory about how great this guy was. And Leonard says, "You're okay now son, you'll be alright."

But it was a time that it was really interesting to work. And that's when I first met Dean and we worked together, and Dean knowing full well that I was a very strong Republican, we made, at that point, made the compact. We had our own thoughts politically, but from a friendship standpoint, that's where it stopped. But we still fight to this day, that I think I'm right and he thinks he's right. But we put those things aside to make the institution run.

Dean Foster: So in '72, when we're adding staff like mad, we hired a lot of people that year. And we even gave the Republicans some staff, and we argued about that. And we couldn't figure out why they didn't want to have—at the beginning, we were even going to have joint secretarial pools. We couldn't figure out why the Republicans didn't want to have joint secretarial pools. They finally brought us around. And what we ended up doing, however, is we invented the phrase "Office of Program Research," and we attempted to hire people there, and we did it in a bi-partisan way. But don't get confused that I really believe that totally. But we did do a lot of work on who we brought in. We brought in people from around the country to go to work for us. And I don't believe there's anybody left on this payroll that was hired during that period of time. But we brought in a lot of people. And we also allowed both caucuses to hire caucus staff. The political reality at the time was: let's don't deny the political reality. And so we hired people to work in staffs. And I think, in the beginning, we only maybe had one staff person for every two House members. But that changed pretty quickly after that.

We took over this building [John L. O'Brien Building]; we had started using it but we really then started putting together offices for people. The most important thing we did was we started developing data banks. Remember, the computer was real new at this point. A fellow named Dean Morgan, who used to work with Vito at Boeing, got this idea that we could develop something and it became LEAP. But what we were really trying to do was, because the Dan Evans people—I wouldn't suggest it was the wrong thing for them to do—they had all the financial data, and we didn't have any financial data, and the Legislature didn't really have a lot of time

to study financial data. And so we moved the Legislature into having the same kinds of numbers. And then we started putting together systems, even with the executive, that "let's at least have the same number that we start from." So we started some interim work with budget committees—and I think there are a couple of people here that were really involved in that. So at least we started with some base of the same numbers. You could disagree all you want on a partisan basis or an institution basis on how to spend the money or how to allocate it, but "let's don't get too far away from at least understanding what we're working with." Prior to those times, it was by-guess-and-by-gosh how much the revenue forecast was going to be and you hoped you didn't miss it by too much. And if you did, you had to go in and put in ratable reductions, which were a cut of the budget, or you had to go in and raise taxes which—it hasn't changed—nobody in the Legislature likes to raise taxes.

Vito, particularly, was involved with the computer side of this. Early in my career, we were involved in redistricting, and Vito brought a fellow down from Boeing. We had set up a big old computer over in the other building, and it was the first time that anybody had ever used that kind of stuff. And we got on the phone and it went back to Boeing. We won the election that year after that redistricting so I thought it worked pretty well. But bringing Vito into the operation in '73 and '74 is what really—and Dean Morgan—is what really helped bring the Legislature into it, and now you're way beyond what either one of us know or understand. But we really did become equal with the executive branch of government.

Vito Chiechi: That's right. And what was interesting during that time, I think Dean is being just a little bit shy about the Office of Program Research. The Democrats brought that Office of Program Research into being and it was a change that had never been incurred: legislators having staff? Legislators having the ability to go to the Office of Program Research and find somebody that *wasn't* partisan and that *gave* you the straight skinny on a particular piece of legislation? Not heard of anyplace in the country. And it was a real, real switch.

And when he talks about the redistricting, when we came together… When I was working with the Boeing Company, being a political nerd, I was keeping, by precinct, every vote count by hand—you know, who got this many votes, by precinct. And so when I came down here, talking to Leonard, we showed him—Dean Morgan and I—one day showed him what we had captured by computer to where you could take—and some of you folks will remember the coupling where you would dial in to, today what you call your modem—and you would dial in and go to the Boeing Company where all the data was held, and you could change the complexion of any district with just a flick of the button. Well, Leonard had all this data, and Bob Greive, the senator, was over, changing all of these maps; they had all the maps on the Floor and they had the calculator calculating what the difference was between if you moved one precinct there or over here. Well, he—that wasn't Bob Greive, it was Augie Mardesich that was Majority Leader at the time. And Leonard brought him in and we had this

computer, this coupling computer with the data at the Boeing Company, and they brought in their plan—the Senate brought in their plan. And this computer nerd that was with us got on and punched in the numbers, and hit his button, and up it came. And Leonard said, "No, this is wrong. We don't get enough good districts out of this." Of course, Mardesich was madder than heck because he said, "You mean to tell me you've had this all the time and I've been back there on the Floor in the Senate doing this all by hand?" But at that point in time, computers were way out there; people thought you were nuts if you were playing with those little things, you know.

I'll never forget—what was her name—Phyllis Mottman. Now, most of you would not remember that name. But Phyllis Mottman was an institution around here. And when we first brought in the computer that could take and get the bills that were going to go to the Floor, you could put them in and store them and everything, like you would do with a computer today. What they used to do, the bills would come in and they'd type them on the typewriter, and then they'd take and they'd cut it out, that one line, and then they'd paste it on a piece of paper, and then they'd take that piece of paper, put it on the mimeograph machine in order to get it out to the Floor. And Phyllis Mottman always had the typewriter, and she said, "Vito, you will never, ever get me to use that computer." And I said, "Phyllis, someday you will." And she said, "No, no, no, no, I never will." Now, when I came back to the House quite a few years later, Phyllis had that computer, but she had her arms over it so I couldn't see it.

Dean Foster: When, back to '63 when I started doing redistricting, there were people in the Code Reviser's Office who particularly hated me. The Code Reviser's Office was using—they'd come a long way—they were using electric typewriters, but they still had—it's either seventeen or nineteen carbons—that they had to type from. And that was the original bill, plus whatever the carbons were. And I would start writing a redistricting bill, and we did it by precinct. And somebody would work all night and they'd have forty-two districts done and we'd decide to change it. You'd have to literally start all over again typing those things. So things have advanced a lot technologically from—it's less than fifty years ago where people were still doing things by hand like that.

So one morning—after one election evening—we wake up and the Democrats are going along just fine, fat and sassy, and we wake up the next morning and we think we've lost control of the Legislature in the 1978 election. Vito had been telling me all summer they were going to catch us. Doc Hastings had told me and I actually made a fairly sizable bet with Alex Deccio. Doc Hastings had said, "We have a plan and we're going to execute on it." And they certainly did. And we woke up, we actually thought we were going to loose the majority. I believe it was Joe King that was the one that pulled the race out of it, no, it wasn't Joe?

Denny Heck, speaking from the audience: Jerry Hughes?

Dean Foster: Anyway, we woke up and what do you do? John Bagnariol was the Speaker of the House; Duane Berentson was the Minority Leader in the House. And so we started sort of trading phone calls, and everybody was up in arms; they don't know what to do. I remember the next day I was supposed to be on a radio program and nobody knew what we were going to do. We had a little bit of research around the country but there wasn't really much that had happened.

So Vito calls and said, "Come out to my house and let's have a drink." So "Baggie" [John Bagnariol] and Duane and I went out and we started talking. And we talked well into the night because we didn't know where we were going, either. What we came up with, we didn't start there at all. We started with—well, first we talked about the possibility of having an outside person be Speaker. And we talked about a person being Speaker—electing a Speaker—and trading other things for that. And we looked at other states: some states had a mechanism for dealing with the tie, some states didn't. We brought in a number of the members from both parties; we would meet up in Seattle at that restaurant.

Vito Chiechi: "Thirteen Coins."

Dean Foster: Thirteen Coins. Richard Larsen caught us there one time and he sat and listened. We brought in other members and we'd throw out something on the table and we'd play games with, "How does it work?" Baggie and Duane were doing a lot of listening and nobody was exactly sure what we were going to do. And so we'd say, "Well, let's have committees and let's share the chairmanships," and then we'd try to bid for which committee you wanted, and we'd try to bid for what the contract would be. In the meantime, the press was wondering what we were going to do. And we were all worried that the other guy was going to steal one of our members. There were some of our members that were worried how much it was going to cost us to have a dual operation, and so they'd say, "Well, I'm not sure that I can vote for this." Well, you'd run down there and talk to them. We were doing the same thing they were doing; we were talking to people on the side, or going through conduits to see if we could pick up that other vote. It became pretty clear that that wasn't going to happen, and it became pretty clear that if we were going to govern—I didn't really understand this part of it, but both Baggie and Duane thought they were going to be governor within a period of time. And they wanted to be successful. And the way to be successful is you couldn't have forty-nine—forty-nine votes all session. You had to accept reality. And so we just split it, and we just said, "You've got to have the other side to pass legislation." We wrote the rules so—I mean, we didn't really trust each other. Baggie and Duane would go into the office, and Duane would say, "Baggie, why'd you do this? You told me yesterday you weren't going to do this." Baggie

would say, "I lied!" That would be the end of it. And it was done in a respectful way, with a lot of fun. But we finally wrote the rules, and we finally wrote it that required, in committee or anyplace else, we had to have a bi-partisan operation.

Vito Chiechi: But Dean, at that point in time, I think you have to talk about, these people were friends, Baggie and Berentson were friends. They could sit down and drink a fifth of whiskey with no problem at all. But they had the capability of talking to each other; they didn't trust each other, okay.

And I have to go back, Dean—I don't know if you can remember this—but I tried desperately to get that fiftieth vote. I had one woman, I'm trying to remember her name.

Dean Foster: I don't think we ought to say that on television. I know who you're talking about. We knew every time you met with her. But we didn't seem like we were…

Denny Heck: Carol Monohon!

Vito Chiechi: Oh, man! Hey, I talked to that lady more times to see if I could get her to go, but I could never get her over there. "Oh yes, Vito, I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it." And then she would never do it.

Dean Foster: He was a lot closer, we thought. We were talking to people, and when you make a major change in control, the party that's in control has no idea what happened. They can't believe they've lost the majority; they thought it was theirs forever. And the party that picked up the tie or the majority has no clue what they're doing; they think they've got the world at their heels, but they don't know what they're doing, but they're really trying hard. And so you've got these two competing forces. And I don't know what happens when it changes party, but in this particular case, both of us, we were shocked and they were excited.

We had to get out of that kind of thing to put it in operation. And so the Republicans who we talked to—who we thought we could get to pick up a fiftieth vote for whatever reason—we weren't even close to having. Vito was pretty close; at least he was close enough that we were pretty worried about it. And we wrote the rules such that even on the day of the election we thought nothing much could happen.

That session was, in my mind, a pretty good session because people accepted reality. What I think that session changed, however, was because every party had to stick together or they would lose, decisions had to be made in caucuses. That was the first time that we ever had Rules Committee caucuses, where you went off on your own. And when our committee chairs would agree on something, they had to make sure that sort of the caucus was going along. We didn't have a lot of fifty to forty-eight votes. And as a result of that, the next year it got even more partisan because they got used to doing that sort of stuff. And so while I talked about the coalition in '63, I believe the tie in ['79] led to a more partisan place. It led to a more partisan place because

both Bagnariol and Berentson wanted to be governor and both caucuses just wanted that one more vote and so they were all keeping an eye out for how it is in the next election, could they do it?

But that's reality, and that's exactly what happened. There probably was more party discipline then and because people wanted to do some things, they probably got a lot more done. It took a few years after that to learn how to operate in that kind of environment, where we had become more partisan.

Vito Chiechi: This is where I would like to come back from my standpoint. I started and Speaker Sawyer got in trouble and was deposed. Okay, so the day that that vote come down, one of the leaders of the Democrat caucus came in and said, "Republican, you've got to go." And so out the door I went. They fired me promptly. So I've been fired a number of times around here, let me tell you. But at that point, what I did is I went out and formed a company, my company called "Chiechi and Associates." And it was a political consulting company. And a young man by the name of Franz Gregory, who was on staff on the Leonard Sawyer team, was a very, very brilliant young man. He and I got together and we formed this little consulting group and went to the House Republicans and said, "Look, we think we know how we can get the majority next time if you'll just hire us." And so they did. And we did; we worked. We didn't get the majority, but that's when we came to—from thirty-six to forty-nine seats. And we went in and worked very, very hard.

Was that the time Denny Heck—I've got to tell this story about Denny Heck. When I found a paraplegic to run against Denny Heck down in his district—and he's never forgiven me for that. And to this day he still brings it up, he said, "I didn't have anybody filed against me and you had to go get that paraplegic." And I had him out there with signs on the street corner, holding up the sign, "Beat that no-good Denny Heck."

Denny Heck: How'd that work out for you?

Dean Foster: Well, he got a tie out of it.

Vito Chiechi: I got a tie out of it, yes. And as Dean said, in the next election the Republicans got the majority. And of course, at that point I became Chief Clerk.

And I got to go back to, excuse me, but I got to go back to the forty-nine—forty-nine. One of the things that we had agreed on—because we didn't know where we were going—is that if there was a dispute on the Floor over an issue, the Speaker, whoever was on the rostrum on that day—because what they would do is, each day they would change the Speaker. The Speaker would call, put the House at ease. And Dean and myself and the two Speakers would go into the Speaker's office and try to resolve the problem. Well, we did that quite often. But quite often, those two bozos would get in there and they would start drinking and Dean and I would say, "Come on, you guys, we've got to make a decision, let's go, let's go." No, no, don't worry."

But they, again, they got to the point where they would bring in other members to try to figure out how to get it accomplished. But they would get it accomplished in order to make the institution run, that's really the important part. They didn't want to get the institution hung up.

And when I became Chief Clerk, now I had the power and man, oh man, I was going to punish those Democrats because they had been punishing us all these years, okay. Well, one of the things that I decided to do was, I was going to be that conservative Republican that comes in and just really tightens down all the dollars and everything else. And so I looked at the dollar expenditure—and while I didn't cut the number of staff, I cut the amount of money going for their staffing on the Democrat Caucus. Alright, what happens? He [Dean] comes to me and he said, "Okay," so in order not to fire somebody he took a cut in pay! But anyway…

Dean Foster: I don't know what's so funny about that!

Vito Chiechi: But Dean is absolutely right—

Rich Nafziger: That's a terrible precedent!

Vito Chiechi: And Dean is absolutely right, we became heady with the power and that's when we became very, very partisan. But it wasn't partisan to the point where they couldn't talk with each other, because there still were people who were friends with each other. They would argue and just make some absolutely outrageous statements on the Floor at each other and then the next hour they were down at the Spar or they were at someplace else having dinner or enjoying themselves.

But anyway, this is what made our operation, I believe, function; otherwise it would never have functioned. And again, Dean is a little modest because around the country, people would call and ask—you know, other legislatures that had got into the same jam—would call to find out, "How did you folks do it?" And we had numerous calls and we had to tell them—I think it was by sure luck, too, Dean.

But after that, when we became the majority and then I left—I was Chief Clerk and I left in 1982 and went to become—because I had been a strong Reagan supporter, Reagan appointed me to the position of General Service Administrator, Regional Administrator, and I went to work for them, for the federal government at that point.

And then the House Republicans asked me to come back to go to work for them as chief of staff. And I came back and was chief of staff for the Republicans during that period of time. I had gotten heady with being Chief Clerk and so I made some real tough rules for all of the staff assistants. Okay, I made the rules that you had to be at your desk an hour before the session started, and you had to be at your desk as long as your legislator was in the building, and you could not leave. And man, those legislative aides, whew! And so what

happened, they had that riot because they talked to their member every day. And this went on for about three or four months and finally as Speaker Ballard said, "I'm afraid, Vito…" and he fired me. Alan Hayward will remember that one.

Rich Nafziger: Kind of have your head on a pole here, for future clerks.

Dean Foster: When I first became Chief Clerk somebody convinced me that we needed to have a dress code for the legislative aides, which were called secretaries, which were all women. And so they presented me this draft with this dress code. Now, those of you who know me know that I wouldn't know a proper dress code from…And it didn't last three months, it lasted about two days.

I think that our passion for the House and for the Legislature and for the process and our stories could go on a long time, there may be a few questions, however, and probably Vito's rule still goes that you have to be out of your lunch hour by at least 1:15 or something like that. So I think we ought to open this up to dialogue or questions at least, and see if anybody out there has anything they want to talk about.

Vito Chiechi: Absolutely, any questions…

Dean Foster: I would at least acknowledge that the person who replaced me as Chief Clerk was Denny Heck and he picked up a lot of pieces for me, so, he was a great legislator, and a great Chief Clerk, and a great President of TVW. Now I don't know what he's doing. I think he works for Ann Daley.

Question: When you talked about the caucus rooms being full of all the committee staff and everything, and then at one point you mentioned that you came and took this building over. I'm just kind of curious, what *was* in the building?

Dean Foster: The governor had—in this area right here—the governor had what was called OPP&FM, the Office of Program Planning and Fiscal Management. And that was, I think, pretty much the first Floor. And DNR was, I believe on the second…

Rich Nafziger: That was Cherberg, wasn't it?

Dean Foster: Okay, well, I guess I don't remember. But we muscled it pretty good. Because, I mean, the biggest failure that the Legislature has had, in my opinion, so far, has been parking. But it was only after I retired did I recognize that. But this building was—in the middle sixties, the Legislature started encroaching, I think, a little bit in this building, and the same way within the Cherberg Building. But it wasn't until in the seventies that we started really doing the remodeling and then we had that earthquake where we had to move everybody over here [in the John O'Brien Building] while we worked over there and then we were able to do quite a bit here. Earthquakes have been pretty good for us in, some cases.

Question: How many hearing rooms were in this building?

Dean Foster: Well, there were four or five hearing rooms. Don't get confused that hearings were very important in those days. There would be hearings called for five minutes—in five minutes, on the Floor of the House and the Senate. There were no—you didn't put notices out, you didn't have lists of bills that were going to be heard; it was sort of up to the chair. Augie Mardesich was chair—his first year in the Senate, I believe it was—was chair of the Agriculture Committee. He never called a meeting. Now, in those days the farmer block was a lot more important, or a lot larger than it is now. And the farmers were usually the ones who provided the votes for the majority to do things. But the farmers always had farmer legislation done by the forty-fifth or fiftieth day of the session. Augie didn't call a meeting, he didn't call a meeting. The farmers' issues were building up, they were building up, building up, and by the time he had his meeting everything was in line and things went out and everything started moving. But he sent a message that was—I believe, in the Senate, the first message that he really sent—to everybody how good he was.

Question: You know James Andersen, the former member of the Supreme Court?

Dean Foster: He was a member of the '59 Legislature in the House.

Question: He tells a story about the takeover of the…[inaudible]

Dean Foster: Well, I'd have to hear a little more, because in '72 when the staff became full-time, it replaced the interim committees. But the interim committees—it didn't necessarily mean that you were on those committees during the regular part of the session or that the chair was there. They were sort of a filler and everybody was sort of on one. The Legislative Council was the big one and so what, I'd have to see where he made that, because this was a functional change for the Legislature to move from a sixty-day operation to a year-round operation and provide legislators with more information and more computer ability. About that same time is what I mentioned earlier, the public disclosure laws came in, and we started seeing a massive reduction, for whatever reason, in the number of attorneys who were in the Legislature. And we started seeing that new group of people who were coming back from Vietnam who were sort of opening things up. That might be what was happening at that same time: the openness of the meetings; the openness of the Rules Committee; starting to publish notices of when committees would meet; rules in the Legislature about you had to have a one-day notice or a three-day notice or something like that; a change in the way the conference committees worked. In those days, the free conference committee could do anything they wanted, and you got one vote on it; now you've got notice and hearings and those kinds of things. So I would guess that's probably what he was talking about. That the whole process—this wasn't just in the state of Washington—country-wide, the entire legislative process was starting to open up. We were getting information from people on their finances, and those kinds of

things, though I guess I talked myself into *that* being the ethics thing that he was talking about.

Vito Chiechi: Well, I think the one thing though, during that period of time, I think we recognized that this institution is political, and you can't get around that fact—that it is political. But all of a sudden, the political right decided, "No, it is not political." And that is just—in my estimation, of course—if you don't recognize that this institution is run on a political basis, because when you elect that Speaker, he is your leader and that is the political process of how your leader gets there, and if you don't understand that… And that's one of things that is just so, so irritating is that people just do not recognize what the institution of the Legislature is and how it operates. And unfortunately, our good media friends do not talk about how the institution runs; they only go to find where the bad spots are, not the good spots.

Look folks, you guys have got the best jobs in the world. You have got the best job because it is a fun job; at least I always felt it was because you meet great people, you have lots and lots of fun and you're on the edge all the time watching your state do things that nobody else has that opportunity to watch. If you're looking at and you're interested in, number one, the political system, and number two, the legislative system, it's the best job in the world because, as I said, you're on the top of it all the time if you're enjoying your job. I think there was somebody that said, "Hard work never killed anybody, but don't take a chance."

Dean Foster: I'm not going to go after that one!

Rich Nafziger: Well, thank you!